Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1783 - October 14 2011

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1783 with a release date of Friday, October 14th, 2011 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a QST. The FCC takes on the on-line peddlers of cellpgone and other radio jamming devices, Thailand's telecommunications committee donates a repeater to hams helping in flood relief efforts, more on Greece's national society get use of 60 meters and a tribute to a historic radio station in Nashville, Tennessee. All this and more on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1783 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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ENFORCEMENT: TWENTY ONLINE RETAILERS OF ILLEGAL JAMMING DEVICES TARGETED IN OMNIBUS ENFORCEMENT ACTION

If you sell things that jam the airwaves, watch out. The FCC is out to get you. We have more in this report.

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The FCC's Enforcement Bureau has issued 20 enforcement actions against online retailers in 12 states. This for illegally marketing more than 200 uniquely-described models of cell phone, GPS, Wi-Fi and similar signal jamming devices.

According to the FCC, these devices have the capacity to prevent, block, or otherwise interfere with authorized radio communications in violation of section 302(b) of the Communications Act and sections 2.803 and 15.201(b) of the Commission's rules. The Enforcement Bureau's actions are intended to warn retailers and potential purchasers that marketing, selling, or using signal jamming devices in the U.S. is illegal and that the FCC will vigorously prosecute these violations.

In the Omnibus Citation and Order, the Bureau directed each online retailer to take immediate steps to cease marketing signal jamming devices to consumers in the United States and its territories. Such steps include removing the illegal signal jamming devices from online display, expressly excluding consumers in the United States as potential customers, and declining to sell signal jamming devices or complete any sales transaction to consumers in the United States.

The FCC also ordered the online retailers to provide information about their signal jammer suppliers, distribution channels, and sales including the manufacturer of each illegal signal jamming device, the websites that the online retailer has used to market the devices in the United States or its territories, and the corrective actions the online retailer has taken or will take to comply with federal law prohibiting the marketing and sale of jamming devices.

Because these enforcement actions were taken against retailers who are not otherwise regulated by the Commission, the Communications Act requires the Commission to first issue a "citation" describing the violation and warning against future misconduct. The Omnibus Citation and Order emphasized that a second violation could lead to monetary penalties of $16,000 to $112,500 per sale per day of unauthorized radio jamming gear.

For the amateur radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in the newsroom, in Los Angeles.

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It will be interesting to see how many of those on-line sellers dinged by the FCC actually stop selling these types of jamming devices. (FCC)

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RESCUE RADIO: THAILAND'S NBTC DONATES HAM REPEATER TO ASSIST IN FLOOD RELIEF COMMUNICATIONS

The Bangkok Post reports that Thailand's newly formed National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission, better known by its initials NBTC has donated an amateur radio repeater for use in flood relief communications.

The NBTC met on Monday, October 10th and first on the agenda was how to help with the flood crisis relief. Speaking at the meeting, its chairman said it was urgent that telecommunications be improved in flood hit areas. For that reason the commission was donating a repeater to the Amateur Radio Operators Group of Ayutthaya to help reinforce its members radio signals to cover a wider area.

The NBTC's Deputy Chairman added that the commission would continue to help fortify amateur radio networks. Also that it would assign community radio stations to keep the people informed of the flood situation. He closed his remarks by stating that amateur radio operators can be of much help when the country is in crisis.

You can read more about this story on-line at tinyurl.com/flood-crisis-repeater (Southgate, Bangkok Post)

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RESTRUCTURING: GREECE'S NATIONAL SOCIETY GETS 5 MHZ FOLLOW-UP

And a follow up to our story last week concerning Greece's national amateur radio society receiving permission to use a single frequency in the 5 MHz band. R-S-G-B News Reader Jeremy Boot, G4NJH, has the latest on this still emerging story:

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After three years of negotiation the Radio Amateur Association of Greece has been given permission for its headquarters club station,

SZ1SV, to use the channel centered on 5400kHz. SZ1SV is permitted to use 5398.5 to 5401.5kHz for SSB, CW and digital modes, with a maximum power of 100W.

Since the permission is based upon propagation studies, the Greek association is planning to operate a beacon, somewhat similar to our own 5MHz chain, when the station is not being used for contacts.

The RSGB has been working closely with Manos, SV1IW, President of the Radio Amateur Association of Greece, on their planned usage of this channel for beaconing, so that this can exist alongside others usage of the channel for QSOs. Plans for the beacon have yet to be finalised, but it will likely operate every 15 minutes, with an alternating CW and PSK31/PSK63 identifier.

I'm Jeramy Boot, and you are listening to the amateur Radio Newsline.

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There's also late word that the proposed beacon may be capable of being remotely switched on and off. This as a further measure to minimize interference to other users of that valuable 60 meter channel. (GB2RS)

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RESTRUCTURING: WORLDS YOUNGEST NATION ACCEPTED INTO THE ITU

The International Telecommunication Union has announced that the world's newest country, the South Sudan, has joined that world telecommunications governing body. It became the I-T-U's 193rd member state, effective from this past October 3rd.   (IRTS)

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RADIO POLITICS: WORLD ECONOMIC RECESSION TAKES PORTUGUESE REPEATERS OFF THE AIR

Several of Portugal's amateur radio repeaters appear to be the latest casualties of the current world economic crisis. In a message to Southgate News, Miguel Andrade, CT1ETL says that all the repeaters and Echolink nodes located near of Spanish border are off line.

Andrade says that the reason for the blackout is related to the lack of financial support in order to keep these devices working. In other words, the funds are not there at the moment to maintain these systems for their user base.

CT1ETL notes that Jaime Pinheiro, CT2GPZ, is the technical manager for some of these systems. He is reportedly trying to develop partnerships and sponsors to bring the systems back on the air.

So far it is still not possible to predict the date if or when some or all might return to normal operation. As we go to air, art least five of Portugal's amateur radio repeater systems on 2 meters and 70 centimeters are down for the count. (CT1ETL, Southgate)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the N4MWA repeater serving Phelps, Kentuckey.

(5 sec pause here)

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ENFORCEMENT: AUSTRALIA'S ACMA GOES AFTER ALLEGED VK REPEATER JAMMER

A yet to be identified man down-under has found himself the subject of allegations of rules violations and seizure of equipment by the Australian Communications and Media Authority or ACMA. This, following a recent visit to his home.

The raid, in Melbourne's west, follows a prolonged investigation into interference being experienced by hams on two repeater systems. The regulatory authority successfully applied under for a search warrant issued through the Melbourne Magistrates Court.

The ACMA has gone quiet since the raid on September 14, while its investigation in ongoing. A court hearing is yet to be set. What is to be alleged are breaches of the Australian Radiocommunications Act 1992.

In recent months the ACMA has stepped up its enforcement activities against personal communications rules violators. Last June the agency reported how it invoked search warrants and prosecuted two people in Melbourne who used encrypted communications for their own communications. At that time the ACMA found seven radios programmed on the channel suffering interference worth $5000. These were surrendered to it during the court hearing. One offender with an amateur radio entry level Foundation License had it suspended for three months. (VK3PC)

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ENFORCEMENT: LAPD INTERNET UNIT HOPES TO CURB FLASH ROBS

The Los Angeles Police Department's newly created Internet Unit wants to head off any potential instant robberies or so called "flash robs." These are similar to law abiding "flash mobs" that are organized via social networking sites to perform acts of entertainment, dancing or other artistic expression. Only the "flash robs" bring together groups of people who will gather at a department store or other place of business and grab what they can carry away.

By using public domain search engines like Google and other sites along with tips from the general public the Internet Unit hopes to determine if there is a risk of criminal activity. According to the LAPD, social media is evolving and this department is trying to evolve with the technology. (Published news reports)

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RADIO RULES: THE LIGHTSQUARED VS. GPS SAGA - ROUND 5 OR 6

It's the Washington saga that never seems to end. Of coarse we are talking about LightSquared vs. the Global Positioning Industry over concerns over interference between Lightsquared's proposed national system and users of the Global Positioning System in spectrum adjacent to it. And now there's word that Lightsquared may take legal action if it is denied permission by the FCC to build out its planned network.

Jeffrey Carlisle is LightSquared's Vice President of Regulatory Affairs and Public Policy. In a teleconference with reporters on Monday, October 3rd Carlisle said that if it is impossible to get a decision on this that allows his company to move forward that LightSquared will then have to insist on our legal rights.

The FCC has said it that it will not permit LightSquared to operate the proposed network unless it can prove the interference problems to GPS users have been solved. Many vendors and users of Global Positioning System equipment have lobbied the FCC to keep LightSquared from running its network in assigned spectrum adjacent to that used by GPS devices. Global Positioning System users claim that the LightSquared network would degrade service to them because signal levels would be far greater than the satellite transmissions used for GPS.

For its part, LightSquared claims that any problem would be the result of the GPS product suppliers that knew as far back as 2001 that there would be a terrestrial mobile network operating in frequencies adjacent to their devices. The company believes that the problem exists only because of the lack of adjacent channel filtering in current GPS reception equipment and that it's the GPS industry's responsibility to find a cure.

LightSquared's Carlisle did not elaborate on what action the company might take, however he believes that the FCC's basic rules on interference cannot be used to protect the GPS receivers in this particular instance. He also noted that his company is trying to work with the GPS industry to solve the problem by allowing the FCC to approve the network.

Meantime some legal analysts are wondering whom it is that LightSquared might file its litigation against. No matter if it's the GPS industry, the FCC or both, any law suit could wind up going on for years with appeals and counter appeals being filed. By then, it's possible that newer technology could have come along making any current day proposal obsolete. (Technology Today, BroadbandReports, various other published news reports)

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NET ACCESS: COMCAST OFFERS $9.95 A MONTH BROADBAND TO LOW INCOME FAMILIES

Comcast, the nation's largest cable operator, is trying to bring

broadband Internet to the less fortunate. This with a new program that the company says is aimed at reducing the digital divide between high and low income communities in Internet accessibility and digital literacy.

Called "Internet Essentials," the company says low income families will now be able to obtain a fast Internet connection for $9.95 per month. To be eligible, families must have an income of less than $25,000 and a child who qualifies for the free school lunch program. Because Internet access doesn't do much good without a computer, Comcast is also offering coupons that will allow these families to buy a basic personal computer for about $150.

According to Comcaast, this is not a short term promotional deal. According to a company spokesperson, it is a permanent price as long as the child remains in the free lunch program. It also says that those who qualify will not have to purchase any other Comcast service.

The big question now is whether low income families will avail themselves of this budged priced Internet access program. John Horrigan worked with the FCC on its National Broadband Plan. He says that in surveys, non Internet users say that while price is a big barrier, they also cited other reasons. These include digital skills and lack of awareness of relevant content online as other reasons that the Internet is not of interest.

Horrigan, who currently serves with the Internet awareness group TechNet says Comcast will have to do more than drop the price. It will also have to offer additional support services, so that these families become sustainable broadband adopters. More on this story is on-line at www.internetessentials.com. (Comcast, PC World, EdWeek, others)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: SA AMSAT ISSUE FIRST CALL FOR SPACE SYMPOSIUM PAPERS

South Africa AMSAT has issued the first call for papers for the 2012 Space Symposium to be held in Durban next May 12th at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. If you would like to present a paper, please send a brief synopsis to reach SA AMSAT by no later than January 31st 2012. The theme will be 50 years of OSCAR which celebrates the launch of the first amateur radio satellite on December 12th, 1961. (SARL)

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HISTORIC NOTES: PHOTOGRAPHY IN SPACE - THE HASSELBLAD ON-ORBIT

Although the astronauts now use digital cameras the Hasselblad camera was the film camera standard for much of the space program's history. And because of this an astronaut's photography manual developed by Hasselblad for NASA astronauts to learn to get the most out of the camera.

This 40-page color booklet is considered to be a really solid photography guide, with great information on lenses, exposure settings, and camera technique.   Any photographer could get some use

out of it, but if you happen to be up in space, you'll have everything you need to get that perfect shot. Anyone in space or on the ground can access it in .pdf format at tinyurl.com/4dupx8s. (ANS, UniverseToday)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: LEW MCFADIN W5DID INTERVIEWED BY DX COFFEE

Some names in the news. First up this week is Lou McFadin, W5DID, who is best known in ham radio as the engineer behind designing and flight qualifying the ham radio gear on the space shuttle flights and then aboard the ISS. Well Lou's life and career is the feature article in the current issue of DX Coffee. There you will find an interview Lou that which traces his 30 years of involvement in space with projects at NASA and AMSAT.

W5DID worked for NASA from 1967 to 1995 on projects ranging from Apollo moon landings to Lunar Orbit Experiments, the Apollo Soyuz program, the Shuttle, and the ISS. His work literally helped man conquer the frontier of space. For the entire story of Lou's Amazing three decades with NASA, simply take your web browser to tinyurl.com/W5DID-in-space. (ANS)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: FRANK GREENE NAMED NEW RAC OFFIUCE ADMINISTRATOR

Radio Amateurs of Canada says that it has recruited Frank Greene as its new Office Administrator. Green comes to the Canadian national amateur radio society with an extensive management and business background. This includes such specialized areas as sales and marketing, accounting and administration, human resources, staff coordination, facilities management, and project management. He has also participated in several consulting assignments from capacity planning to disaster contingency preparation. (RAC)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: WALT MAYFIELD KE5SOO APPOINTED AS NORTH TESAS SM

And as of Wednesday, October 5th, the ARRL North Texas Section has a new Section Manager in the person of Walt Mayfield, KE5SOO.

According to an ARRL press release, Membership and Volunteer Programs Manager Dave Patton, NN1N, made the appointment in consultation with West Gulf Division Director David Woolweaver, K5RAV.

The release noted that Mayfield has served as the North Texas Section Emergency Coordinator and is the president of the Denton County Amateur Radio Association. He replaces Jay Urish, W5GM, who has stepped down as Section Manager for personal reasons. Mayfield's appointment continues through March 31, 2013. (ARRL)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: QSLS SOLICITED FOR 90 YEAR OLD HAM

And a note from Tad Cook, K7RA, says that his fathers cousin Bill Kingsley, W7UVU, is 90 years old and in hospice care. Cook says that Kingsley had a career in the US Navy and was also licensed as F0GKL and F7ER in years past.

K7RA says that W7UVU was active on the High Frequency bands until recently, and has been a licensed ham for nearly 3/4 of a century.

Cook says that he would really appreciate it if amateur radio operators would send him their QSL card with a short greeting. You can send your cards to Bill Kingsley, W7UVU, 65 W. 30th. Ave., Apartment 524, Eugene, Oregon 97405-3373.

K7RA adds a big thank you in advance to anyone who responds. (K7RA)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: ULTRASONIC BATTERY CHARGING

The day when we don't have to plug in our consumer electronics is getting close. This according to a claim a from new startup firm named uBeam that has developed what it terms as a safe way of beaming power to charge your batter operated devices.

Rather than using inductive charging, which has a very short effective range and usually requires that the charger and device be in close proximity to each other, uBeam uses an ultrasonic transducer to convert power from your wall socket into inaudible sound energy. On the device side, there's a battery adapter that converts the sound energy back into power to charge your batteries.

The ultrasonic frequency used is well above the range that can be heard by humans or dogs. More is on-line at www.ubeam.com (VK7WI news)

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WORLDBEAT: RADIO/TV MARTI VS. CUBA ON AUTO TEXTING

Cuba alleges that the United States operated Radio and Television Marti is violating that nations laws. This is because the broadcaster may disrupt Cuba's cellular text-messaging structure with a computerized system that can send up to 24,000 text messages a week to cell phones on the island.

Developed for mass marketing campaigns, the system makes it almost impossible to block the texts because the computer makes them look as though each individual message was sent from a different telephone number.

The stations director is Carlos Garca-Perez. He says that Radio and Television Marti is using the text messages to deliver the same kind of news and information that the US government-run stations already broadcast to the island. (Media Network)

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WORLDBEAT: BBC TO CUTBACK MEDIUM WAVE AND LOOSE LONG WAVE OPERATIONS

The British Broadcasting Corporation says that its that Medium Wave broadcasts will be cut back and the Radio 4 Long Wave transmissions will eventually cease. According to the BBC, there will be reductions in medium-wave transmissions for local radio in England where coverage replicates FM. There will also be no reinvestment in long wave, which will lead to the end of Radio 4 operations eventually going away.

The changes are in part the result of a restructuring of the BBC which is also planning to cut 2,000 jobs and radically change programming in order to cut 20% from its budget over the next five years. More on this is on-line at tinyurl.com/BBC-Longwave-cutbacks. (BBC)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: HELP SOUGHT IN TRACKING UPCOMING LAUNCH OF AUBIESAT-1

Help in tracking the upcoming launch of the AubieSat-1 ham radio satellite is being sought by Professor Jean-Marie P Wersinger, KI4YAU, who is Professor Emeritus and Director of Auburn University Student Space Program in Alabama.

AubieSat is scheduled for launch at 9:52 UTC on October 25th from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. AS-1 is designed to transmit with a power of about 800 milliwatts on a frequency of 437.475 MHz, plus or minus Doppler correction. The beacon signal, along with telemetry, will be sent using continuous wave Morse code at 20 words per minute. Additional telemetry from the on board science experiment will use CW transmissions up to 60 WPM.

Professor Wersinger says that based on the pre-launch orbital data provided by NASA, AubieSat-1 will activate after deployment at 12:21 UTC. At that time the sub-satellite point will be at 34.52 degrees South latitude and 1.52 degrees West longitude over the South Atlantic Ocean. An Echolink conference group is planned to begin one-half hour prior to launch and continue until about 30 minutes after confirmation of the first receipt of signals from the satellite.

AubieSat-1 is an undergraduate built CubeSat satellite developed by Auburn University. Reception reports go by e-mail to wersijp (at) auburn (dot) edu and tam0013 (at) auburn (dot) edu. (KI4YAU, ANS)

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ON THE AIR: VK100RAV CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF HAM RADIO IN AUSTRALIA'S VICTORIA STATE

On the air, listen out for the special Australian VK100ARV during the month of November. This will likely be a well sought after call and qualifies toward the Australian Amateur Radio Centenary Award.

By way of background, 2011 is the 100th anniversary of the Amateur Wireless Society of Victoria, that was formed in 1911. It quickly changed its name to the Wireless Institute of Victoria, and today is known as Amateur Radio Victoria. VK100ARV will be operational to commemorate that founding event. (VK3PC)

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ON THE AIR: LM9L40Y CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF THE LA9L RADIO CLUB

A reminder for the prefix hunters that the special event albeit somewhat complicated call LM9L-40Y will be on the air until the end of December. This station is being operated by members of the LA9L Radio Club in Norway and is to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of that organization. (WIA News)

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ON THE AIR: ROCKALL OPERATION DEEMED A SUCCESS

And the recent MM0RAI/P Rockall DXpedition is being considered as being a major success. The team managed to land on the rock and set up the station. Operation started on October 1st at 15:45 UTC and ended on October 2nd at 06: 52 UTC. Online logs will be available shortly. For more information, including photographs, check out www.rockall.be. (Southgate)

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DX

In DX, HB9IQB has been granted a license by the Palestinian Ministry of Telecommunications and Technology in Ramallah. He plans to be active as E-44-P-M starting at 0001 U-T-C on December 16th, or possibly a few hours earlier. The log for his operation will be uploaded onto the Logbook of The World soon after he goes QRT. For more details, QSL details and updates, please visit tinyurl.com/4yc9st8 on the World-Wide-Web.

N6HD will be active portable 4-Xray from Israel between October 23rd and November 3rd. His operation will be on 160 through 10 meters using CW and SSB. QSL via his home callsign or electronically using Logbook of the World.

JK1KSB will take to the airwaves as 8Q7SO from Mirihi Island Resort in the Maldives between October 28th and November 3rd. Activity will be

holiday style on 80 through 10 meters using CW, RTTY, SSB and PSK31. QSL via JK1KSB, either via the bureau or to the address on QRZ.com.

AJ9C will be operational from Nicaragua as YN2CC starting on November 24th and continuing to December 5th. He will be active on 160-10 m CW , SSB and RTTY. He plans to take part in the CQ World Wide DX CW Contest November 26th and 27th as well. QSL electronically using Logbook of the World.

G3RWF will be active as 5X1NH from Uganda starting November 23rd for three weeks. His on the air time will have an emphasis on low bands using a new amplifier. QSL via his home callsign.

Lastly, An international team of operators will be active from Hatiheu, Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas Islands between October 19th and November 1st. Activity will be on all bands and modes including an entry in the CQWW DX SSB Contest from October 29th to the 30th. Operations will be on 160 through 10 meters including the 30, 17 and12 meter bands on CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL and other information is on-line at www.tx7m.com.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: THE HISTORIC RED AND WHITE DIAMOND TOWER IN NASHVILLE TENNESSEE

And finally this week, a big happy birthday to radio station the that's likely best known in technical circles as the home of one of the last of the famed Blaw-Knox diamond shaped towers in the world, and to county music aficionados as the radio birthplace of that genre of music. Of coarse we are talking about radio station WSM in Nashville, Tennessee and Amateur Radio Newsline's Norm Seeley, KI6UP, has the details:

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At 8 o'clock in the evening of October 5, 1925, some 300 people gathered at the corner of 7th and Union Street in Nashville, Tennessee to hear the first broadcast of WSM-AM. Since then, the station has literally putting Nashville on the map as the home of country music.

In a press interview, WSM operations manager Joe Limardi said that the early stages of broadcast country was on that day when the Grand Ole Opry was born on the station back in 1925. Also. that the phrase "Music City U.S.A." was first used by WSM announcer David Cobb in 1950. Today it is Nashville's world-wide nickname.

Limbardi says that the station has evolved over the past 8 and a half decades that it has been on the air. Todays Internet technology brings WSM to listeners around the globe. According to one report, more people listen to the station on-line, than do over the air in Nashville proper. Limbardi says that's the reason why the station put the effort behind being heard on line, and being heard on your apps on smartphones.

There is so much history associated with WSM-AM. Each person who works at the station is well aware of the people who was there before them. But they also know to be a viable, profitable radio station WSM needs more than history on its side. That is why technology is so important to mission of the station.

Limardi says that those new web listeners will allow WSM-AM to be around for another 86 years, adding that the digital age has made it possible for WSM to reach a much larger audience than in years past.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Norm Seeley, KI7UP, in Scottsdale, Arizona.

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According to Wikipedia dot com, WSM's red and white diamond-shaped Blaw-Knox antenna tower has a story unto its own and is one of the area's landmarks. When it was built in 1932, the then 878-foot tower was the tallest antenna structure in North America. Its height was reduced to 808 feet in 1939. It is now one of the oldest operating broadcast towers in the United States and is listed as a National Engineering Landmark and this past March 15th it was added to the National Register of Historic Places. As an aside to this story, the Mississippi amateur radio operator's license plate features a diamond Blaw-Knox tower with lightning bolts shooting from the top. A classy ham plate indeed. (RW, Wikipedia, other sources)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline(at) arnewsline (dot) org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Don Wilbanks, AE5DW, saying 73 from sunny Mississippi and we thank you for listening.

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